

In the Claims

Please amend claims 1-4 as follows:

1. (currently amended) A wooden post protective sleeve for protecting a lower end of a wooden post from rotting while positioned within a hole in a ground area while also making insertion into and removal from the hole easier, comprising, ~~in combination:~~

a collar having a generally rectangular configuration, the collar having an open upper end, a closed lower end, and four surrounding side walls, the open upper end being dimensioned for receiving the lower end of the wooden post therein, the four surrounding side walls each having an aperture therethrough downwardly of the open upper end, the apertures being dimensioned for receiving wood screws therethrough for engaging the lower end of the wooden post, the closed lower end having a plurality of drainage apertures therethrough for allowing any water on the sleeve or the wooden post to drain into the ground area, the drainage apertures including a central aperture and four corner apertures, the collar being fabricated of plastic.

2. (currently amended) A wooden post protective sleeve for protecting a lower end of a wooden post from rotting while positioned within a hole in a ground area while

also making insertion into and removal from the hole easier,  
comprising, ~~in combination~~:

cont. Q1  
a collar having an open upper end, a closed lower end,  
and a surrounding side wall, the open upper end being  
dimensioned for receiving the lower end of the wooden post  
therein, the surrounding side wall having a plurality of  
apertures therethrough downwardly of the open upper end, the  
apertures being dimensioned for receiving wood screws  
therethrough for engaging the lower end of the wooden post,  
the closed lower end having a plurality of drainage apertures  
therethrough for allowing any water on the sleeve or the  
wooden post to drain into the ground area, the drainage  
apertures including a central aperture and four peripheral  
apertures, the collar being fabricated of plastic.

3. (currently amended) The wooden post protective  
sleeve as set forth in claim 2, wherein the collar and the  
wooden post each ~~have~~ has a rectangular configuration.

4. (currently amended) The wooden post protective  
sleeve as set forth in claim 2, wherein the collar and the  
wooden post each ~~have~~ has a cylindrical configuration.

---